

## Dallas, TX – LULAC Entrepreneurs

**Location:** Dallas, TX

**Venue:** League of United Latin American Citizens

### **Intro to the City, Distinctive Aspects and Demographics:**

Dallas, Texas, stands as a major hub for business, culture, and innovation in the United States. Home to an extensive network of higher education institutions and corporate headquarters, the city boasts a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem. The University of Texas at Dallas and Southern Methodist University are among the institutions offering entrepreneurship programs that support student and community entrepreneurs through courses, incubators, and competitions. Programs like these offer critical support and mentorship, fostering the next generation of business leaders in Dallas and beyond.

**Regional Assets** - Dallas, located in the heart of North Texas, is the third-largest city in the state and part of the Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington metroplex, which has a population exceeding 7.5 million. The city serves as a major economic and cultural center, with industries spanning technology, healthcare, transportation, and finance. Dallas is within a three-hour flight of most U.S. destinations and offers excellent connectivity through Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport and Dallas Love Field. The city is also a transportation hub, with access to key interstate highways (I-35, I-45, and I-30) and freight rail systems, supporting its position as a logistics leader. The city's cultural richness is reflected in its vibrant arts scene, world-class museums, and diverse culinary offerings. From the Dallas Arts District—the largest urban arts district in the country—to Deep Ellum's live music venues, Dallas offers a unique blend of tradition and modernity.

**Financial and Business Resources** - Dallas boasts a wealth of financial and business support organizations aimed at nurturing entrepreneurship and small business growth. The Dallas Entrepreneur Center (DEC) connects startups to funding, mentorship, and resources, while organizations like PeopleFund and LiftFund specialize in microloans for underserved communities. Dallas Innovates, a publication focused on the local entrepreneurial ecosystem, highlights emerging opportunities and resources for startups. The city also hosts multiple accelerator programs and co-working spaces, including Capital Factory, which provides funding, mentorship, and networking opportunities for tech startups.

**Workforce** - The workforce in Dallas is highly educated and diverse. Over 35% of the population holds a bachelor's degree or higher, and the city has a strong talent pipeline supported by institutions like the University of Texas at Dallas, Southern Methodist University, and Dallas College. Dallas consistently ranks among the top cities for job growth, with industries like tech, healthcare, and professional services leading the way. Over the past year, thousands of jobs have been added, reflecting the city's robust economic expansion.

**Infrastructure** - Dallas has exceptional infrastructure to support businesses and residents alike. Major highways like I-35, I-45, and I-30 crisscross the city, and the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) system offers comprehensive public transportation, including light rail and buses. Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport is one of the busiest in the world, providing direct flights to global destinations. The city's proximity to major rail systems and trucking corridors further enhances its logistical advantages.

**Underserved Communities** - While Dallas is a thriving economic hub, it also faces significant challenges in income inequality and poverty. Nearly 20% of the city's population lives below the poverty line, with African-American and Hispanic communities disproportionately affected. Despite a strong job market, many residents in underserved neighborhoods lack access to high-paying jobs or affordable housing. Community organizations and programs, such as the DEC's initiatives targeting minority and women entrepreneurs, aim to address these disparities, fostering inclusivity in the city's growth.

### **Intro to Your Poverty and Entrepreneurship Program**

Program name: LULAC Entrepreneurs

- Likely to be mirrored after LULAC El-Paso program

### **Program Goals**

- The program will run its first Cohort in 2025. To ensure entrepreneurs make progress, vetting will be implemented to prevent students from receiving microgrant funds without advancing their ventures. Each student must demonstrate a clear plan for utilizing the funds, and the LULAC Council will monitor progress.
- Follow-up with Phase I students will assess their commitment and business readiness, focusing on areas like business acumen, financial literacy, problem-solving, customer service, innovation, and competition analysis. Key indicators of progress include applying for a DBA, forming an LLC, producing the product or service, projecting sales, and achieving profits.

